

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended better to distinguish the invention patentably over the cited art. Claim 1 now states that the fired raw material layer is one applied to an inner circumferential wall of the ceramic honeycomb structure; the Examiner is referred to the embodiment in Fig. 1(b) depicting such a structure. There, the outer circumferential wall portion 3 is applied to the inner circumferential wall of the ceramic honeycomb structure.

The requirement to cancel the "new drawing" submitted with the last reply is noted. The Examiner is informed that the drawing was merely a representation of what takes place in the invention, and is not intended in any way to constitute a drawing as such. The submission was not intended to be a drawing, nor was it intended to be part of the specification; it was intended, however, that the drawing be part of the record in support of patentability. Should the Examiner, after hearing this explanation, require anything further, she is asked to contact the undersigned.

The rejection of claims 1, 2, 4 to 6, and 8 under 35 USC 102 as anticipated by Kotani et al. '067 is respectfully traversed. Applicant has explained at length the difference between the instant invention and what is shown in this reference. Claim 1,

moreover, now specifies that the layer that is fired is one applied to an inner circumferential wall of the ceramic honeycomb. There is no contemplation in Kotani et al. '067 of applying an outer layer to an inner circumferential wall. The reference clearly depicts coating a ceramic honeycomb body, the radially outermost array of the multiplicity of cells in the body being open to an outside of the body. The coating fills the grooves to form a ceramic honeycomb structure. One would desire similarity between the ceramic honeycomb body and the coating placed on the outside thereof. Applicant's invention achieves a different result as explained at length during the prosecution of this case. The rejection should be withdrawn.

The rejection of claims 1 to 3, and 5 under 35 USC 102 as anticipated by Matsubara et al. '148, if applied to the claims as amended, is also respectfully traversed. This reference also does not teach or suggest the application of a layer to an inner circumferential wall of a ceramic honeycomb structure, and for the reasons given above, as well as the reasons given in the Amendment Under 37 CFR 1.111, the claims patentably define thereover. The portions of Matsubara et al. '148 cited by the Examiner in support of the rejection do not teach or suggest a structure recited in claim 1, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

The rejection of claim 7 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Kotani et al. '067 is also respectfully traversed, as is the rejection of claim 3 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Kotani et al. '067 in view of Beauseigneur et al. '722. Claims 3 and 7 both depend from claim 1, which is clearly patentable over Kotani et al. '067. The dependent claims also patentably define thereover.

The comments in the Response to Arguments are noted. It is respectfully submitted that the observations are moot in view of the further restriction of claim 1. The Kotani et al. '067 article will not inherently perform in the same manner as the ceramic honeycomb structure of the present claims because the items are structurally different. The analysis presented in the paragraph bridging pages 8 and 9 of the Office Action shows, with respect, a misunderstanding of the working and comparative examples. Those examples establish collectively what the instant invention accomplishes. The examples merely show ways in which one is able to control differences in the thermal expansion coefficient of the outer circumferential wall and an inside partition wall portion of a ceramic honeycomb structure.

As to the comment in the second full paragraph on page 9 of the Office Action, applicant respectfully submits that the property mentioned is not a process step, but rather a characteristic in a material constituting part of the claimed ceramic honeycomb structure.

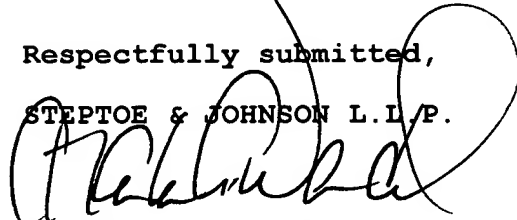
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Favorable consideration of the case is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned if additional changes are required in the application prior to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

STEPTOE & JOHNSON L.L.P.



Charles A. Wendel  
Registration No. 24,453

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CAW/cd

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STEPTOE & JOHNSON L.L.P.  
1330 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036  
(202) 429-3000